

NOTES ON A COLLECTION OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES  
FROM SOUTHERN MEXICO, WITH A  
DESCRIPTION OF A NEW *Hyla*

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A small collection of 19 specimens of amphibians and reptiles, collected during the months of January and February, 1956, from Chiapas and Oaxaca is important because of several new records for the states and because it includes as well a new species of *Hyla*. Most of the specimens were taken near the town of Solistahuacán, located approximately 30 miles north of the state capital, Tuxtla Gutierrez and 40 miles east of Comitán, Chiapas.

I am indebted to Professor Ernest S. Booth of Walla Walla College, Washington, who with his students made the collection, and has graciously permitted me to examine and to report it. Dr. Hobart M. Smith has been kind enough to aid in certain comparisons, determinations and loans, and Dr. Doris M. Cochran has aided by the loan of comparative material from the U. S. National Museum.

AMPHIBIANS

*Bufo valliceps* Wiegman

One specimen taken along a small stream, 17 February, 40 miles east of Comitán, Chiapas.

*Hyla macrotympanum*, n. sp.

*Type*: BYU No. 13752, an adult female from 10 miles east of Chiapa de Corzo, Chiapas, collected by Robert Bohlman on January 30, 1956. Found on a tree trunk near a small stream.

*Diagnosis*: A medium sized *Hyla*, related to *miotympanum* and perhaps *darlingi*, but differing from these in having a tympanum more than one half the size of the diameter of eye; snout pointed; upper lip with a median notch; snout moderately long; a straight transverse series of prevomerine teeth; and with the tongue free and notched behind.

*Description of type*: Snout to vent length 35.3 mm; head width 12.6 mm; tibia 20.2 mm; width of eye lid 3.9 mm; length of orbit 4.1 mm; orbit to nostril 3.4 mm; length of snout 5.0 mm; head not flattened, skin loose, not attached to skull; interorbital distance (4.2 mm) noticeably larger than diameter of eye (3.2 mm); diameter of tympanum (2.0 mm) more than half the diameter of eye; canthus rostralis sharp, interrupted by the enlarged upper edges of the naris, and then continuing to form a pointed snout; loreal region oblique, not concave; dermal fold extending from posterior edge of orbit to axilla and covers the upper edge of tympanum; upper lip with a distinct median notch; anal flap moderate in size.

Choanae oval; five prevomerine teeth in a straight transverse

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series on each process, not angular and located midway between the anterior and posterior edges of the choanae; distance between patches of prevomerine teeth distinctly less than distance to choanae; tongue broadly heart shaped, free posteriorly and with a distinct notch; maxillary teeth light brown.

Fingers one half webbed; thumb with little webbing; pads wider than long and larger than digits; pad on middle finger largest, equal in size to tympanum; pad on thumb smallest; first finger noticeably shorter than second, its tip not reaching the lower edge of pad of second finger; postsubantibrachial ridge well developed and nearly uniform; heels of adpressed hind legs reaching between eye and naris; subarticular tubercle on outer finger distinctly bilobate (appearing as two), other subarticular tubercles small and simple; a series of five well-developed tubercles extending from base of outer finger to heel; thenar tubercle large and followed by two smaller subequal tubercles; many small tubercles scattered over the surface of the palmar surface.

Toes nearly fully webbed; half of last phalanx of fourth toe free; inner metatarsal tubercle moderate in size, oval, inner tarsal fold, a triangle-shaped ridge, not flaplike; outer edge of tarsus round, no sign of fold; pads smaller than tympanum and that of the middle finger; subarticular tubercles small, round; many small tubercles under digits and sole of foot.

Dorsal surface brownish (alcoholic specimen) with irregular spots forming two complete and one incomplete bars on back; larger spots formed by numerous, fine, closely placed stipples; no small spots or flecks scattered over the body; legs with some stippling but without cross bars; anal flap and anal region more heavily stippled and margined above by a light stripe; no other noticeable light stripes on head, body or limbs.

*Remarks:* Only after repeated comparisons with related species and an intensive study of all descriptions and keys have I attempted to describe a new species from a single specimen. However, the present specimen is so unique and morphologically distinct from all other related species as to warrant a description. Furthermore, it is from a remote area, in which few closely related *Hyla* have as yet been secured. It has been compared with *Hyla miotympanum* and the type of *Hyla darlingi*. These species are seemingly most closely related to *Hyla macrotympanum* but are, in each case, with a number of distinctive variations which are beyond the expected range of variation in a species. The larger tympanum, arrangement of the prevomerine teeth and the bilobate subarticular tubercle on the outer finger are especially distinctive.

#### REPTILES

##### *Anolis compressicauda* Smith and Kerster

One specimen taken 23 January, in a heavily forested area 15 mi. south of Jesus Carranza, Oaxaca.

*Anolis biporcatus* Wiegmann

One specimen taken 17 February. from brush along a small stream, 40 mi. east of Comitán, Chiapas.

*Phrynosoma asio* Cope

One specimen taken 12 January, at Salina Cruz, Oaxaca.

*Sceloporus v. variabilis* Wiegmann

One specimen taken 17 February, 40 mi. east of Comitán, Chiapas.

*Sceloporus malachiticus taeniocnemis* Cope

Two specimens taken in a tropical rain forest, 6 February. Solistahuacán, Chiapas.

*Sceloporus s. siniferus* Cope

Two specimens taken 24 January, at Salina Cruz, Oaxaca.

*Cnemidophorus d. deppii* Wiegmann

One specimen taken 24 January, at Salina Cruz, Oaxaca.

*Gerrhonotus l. liocephalus* Wiegmann

One specimen taken 6 February, at Solistahuacán, Chiapas. A subadult male with the following characteristics; dorsals 54 ventrals 39; tail complete and with 93 caudal whorls; loreal-canthals 3-4; supranasals present; azygous prefrontal slightly broader than long; frontal in broad contact with interpartial; supralabials 10-10; infralabials 8-8; and postmental single. Total length 117 mm.. snout-vent 43 mm.. tail to body ratio 1.17. Dorsal bands obsolete; venter and throat with numerous dark spots.

The present specimen is obviously not a representative of *L. austrinus* found in southwestern Chiapas, although it is closely related. This represents a southward extension of the range of *L. liocephalus* as well as a new state record for Chiapas.

*Dipsas dimidiatus* (Günther)

One specimen, BYU No. 13734, taken 17 February, 40 mi. east of Comitán, Chiapas. It is an adult male with the following characteristics: total length 643 mm., tail 207. tail into total length .321; scale rows 15-15; ventrals 189; caudals 114; supralabials 8-8. anterior ones higher than wide; infralabials 9-9; preoculars 2-2; postoculars 2-2; temporals 1-2; loreal absent; nasal single; upper preocular dividing the supraocular and the large preocular and lying between the orbit and prefrontal; mental followed by an azygous scale, which is followed by three pair of chinshields; first pair largest, all longer than wide and with the last pair divergent; first three pair of infralabials in contact with azygous scale, posterior part of azygous scale wedged between the anterior chinshields.

Head broad, strongly constricted behind; body laterally compressed, long and slender, tapering into an elongate thin tail. Eye large, pupil vertically elliptical; snout blunt.

Dorsum of head black, except for small central reddish spots on parietals; a small dark spot on the median pair of chinshields; body with alternating reddish and bluish bands across the dorsals; ventrals with alternating dark and white bands, red on dorsals to edge of ventrals, ventral blue in contact laterally with the reddish dorsal bands. Dark body bands 29, dark tail bands 17.

*Variations:* The large scale between the orbit and nasal scute is considered to represent an enlarged preocular, thus in this specimen the loreal is not present. It is apparently different to those specimens previously described (Smith 1943: 470) and including the type (Gunther 1894: 143-4, pl. 51), in having a small upper preocular which prevents the prefrontal from entering the orbit.

Although the type locality is listed as "Mexico," no definite locality has been previously recorded. Thus, the present record is not only new for Chiapas, but is the first definite one for Mexico.

*Ninia s. sebae* (Duméril, Bibron, and Duméril)

Two specimens taken 6 February, at Solistahuacán, Chiapas.

*Pliocercus e. elapoides* Cope

One specimen taken 10 February, at Solistahuacán, Chiapas. This record extends the range southward and is a new state record for Chiapas.

*Leptodeira annulata polysicta* Günther

Two specimens, one taken 28 January, at Tapanatepec, Oaxaca; and one taken 6 February, at Solistahuacán, Chiapas. The latter specimen had recently eaten an *Anolis compressicauda*.

*Leptodeira maculata* Hallowell

One specimen taken 20 February, at Tuxtla Gut, Chiapas.

*Bothrops mexicanus* (Duméril, Bibron, and Duméril)

One specimen taken 7 February, at Solistahuacán, Chiapas.

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### JOSEPH RICHARD SLEVIN (1881-1957)

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Members of the California Academy of Sciences and Herpetologists will greatly miss the genial and cooperative help of Joseph R. Slevin who died February 15, 1957, at the age of 75. For 53 years Mr. Slevin had been connected with the Academy. He first served as a collector and understudy of Dr. John Van Denburgh, next as herpetologist on the Galapagos Island Expedition sent out by the Academy in 1905-1906 and finally as a capable curator of the Department of Herpetology following the death of Dr. Van Denburgh in October, 1924.

Mr. Slevin must be given much of the credit for collecting and preserving the enviable collection of more than 75,000 specimens of amphibians and reptiles now in the Academy collection. This collection has been brought together following the fire and earthquake in San Francisco in 1906. At the time of the earthquake, the Academy herpetological specimens numbered 8,100 of which number only 13 were saved from the fire.<sup>2</sup>

The Department of Herpetology of the Academy was organized in 1895 with John Van Denburgh as the first curator. In 1908 Dr. Joseph C. Thompson, a surgeon with the United States Navy, was appointed assistant curator of herpetology. This position was, however, terminated in 1912. During Dr. Thompson's association with the Academy he added his rather large collections of reptiles, which he had made in Japan, Formosa and the Philippine Islands to that of the fast growing Academy collection.

Mr. Slevin, as the second curator of herpetology at the Academy, made collections from many areas between the years 1905 and 1953. Because of the interest students of the reptiles have in the sources of a collection as now found at the Academy, the collecting trips he made are given in some detail. His first trip was made to the Revillagigedo Islands, Mexico and the Galapagos Islands in 1905-1906. This expedition returned 4,506 specimens as a nucleus for the new collection at the Academy. Many specimens were rare gigantic land tortoises from the Galapagos Islands. Fourteen species of land tortoises have been reported from these islands, thirteen of which are

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1. Contribution No. 152, Department of Zoology and Entomology, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

2. Joseph R. Slevin and Allen E. Leviton, 1956. Holotype Specimens of Reptiles and Amphibians in the Collection of the California Academy of Sciences. *Proc. Cal. Acad. of Sci.*, Vol. 28, 4th Series, No. 14, pp. 529-560.